

Kyodan

Kyodan News Letter

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN JAPAN
CHRISTIAN CENTER
2,4 CHOME, GINZA, CHUO KU, TOKYO, JAPAN
Cable Address Japankyodan Tokyo Telephone 561:6131

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NO. 8

THE 14th GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE KYODAN

The 14th General Assembly, of the United Church of Christ was held the week of October 21st to 27th in Osaka, Japan. This was also the 25th Anniversary Year of the Kyodan.

One of the first items of business of the conference was the election of the Moderator and the other Kyodan officers. The office of Moderator is an elective office has a term of two years, and the Moderator must be an ordained minister of the Kyodan who is presently a member of the General Assembly.

The newly elected Moderator is the Rev. Masahisa Suzuki, formerly the Chairman of the Evangelism Committee. The Rev. Mr. Suzuki is pastor of the Nishikata-machi Church in Tokyo, and is the youngest Moderator ever elected by this body. The Vice-Moderator is the Rev. Kiyoshi Ii, formerly the Secretary of the Kyodan. Mr. Ii is presently serving as pastor of the Reinanzaka Church in Tokyo. The new Secretary is the Rev. Mr. Kimura. The latter gentlemen both being in their forties make this the youngest group of officers elected to lead the Kyodan.

THE CONFERENCE THEME;

The theme of the conference and for the Kyodan for the coming years is, OUR CHURCH-TOMORROW. As the Kyodan looks forward to taking its place in the society of Churches, as it continues the proclamation of the Word in Japan, OUR CHURCH-TOMORROW has real significance for the 200,000 persons that comprise its membership. OUR CHURCH-TOMORROW while it is concerned with all areas of the Church life is especially aimed at three main issues that is of immediate importance to the Kyodan in these days that lie ahead. They are as described in Kyodan News Letter No. 7, Independence, (the self-hood of the Church), Unification (the strengthening of the Kyodan by bringing all units of the Kyodan together to present a united front), and Extension (the proclamation of the Word both within and without Japan).

THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
WORSHIP SERVICE

The service was held in Osaka on October 23rd, with about 3,000 persons in attendance. The two speakers of the day were Dr. D. T. Niles of Ceylon, and the Rev. Mr. Suzuki, the New Moderator of the Kyodan.

Dr. Niles spoke to the General Assembly on the Theme of the Church and its responsibilities. The main import of his sermon was that the Church must be at home in the world. There are three worlds that we call home, namely,

1. Home is where I am nourished:
2. Home is where my responsibilities are:
3. Home is where I belong.

Concerning point number one Mr. Niles said that the home of the Japanese is Japan. In order to be at home the Church must have a living conversation with the whole country. All the breezes that blow through the whole country must blow through the Church. Concerning our responsibility, he said, that the Church cannot be a church until it is willing to bear the responsibility of meeting Christ in Society. The final point of - Home is where I belong - Mr. Niles stressed the point that the Church must belong to the country in which it is located. Specifically he said to the Kyodan that Asia is on the move, all peoples, all religions are on the move and that the Kyodan has a great responsibility to see and understand and to move with all these forces.

The Rev. Mr. Suzuki speaking after Mr. Niles and to the same gathering specifically mentioned three areas in which the Church of tomorrow must concentrate its attention.

The first is that the Church must cease to walk parallel with the forces of society. This is the easy way but it is not the responsible way. The Church must make every opportunity to come to crosspoints with society and at this point of contact must adequately proclaim Christ.

The second is that the Church must make true men. The world today is trying to build many kinds of societies but the gospel is concerned with the man. If the true man can be made he will build a true society --this is the proclamation of the word.

Thirdly, the proclamation must be made through the church. The church must be the Church therefore the church must always seek to examine its structure and itself concerning the proclamation.

HUMAN INTEREST

Mr. & Mrs. Tamaichiro Hagio from Osaka gave a genuine witness of stewardship and dedication.

For 30 years these folk have had a great concern for the education and training of ministers. Over a 30 year period the savings from a bakery were put aside for this purpose. It was announced at the assembly that a total gift of 10,000,000 yen (\$ 28,000,00) was made to Tokyo Union Theological Seminary for the sole purpose of ministers education.

VISITORS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

Dr. Ganse Little

Moderator of the United Presbyterian Church of the United States.

Bishop Yoshigoro Taguchi

Bishop of the Diocese of Osaka of the Catholic Church.

Rev. Morihito Higa

The United Church of Christ in Okinawa

Bishop Whan Shin Lee

The Methodist Church in Korea

Rev. Kon-en Cho

The Presbyterian Church of Formosa

Rev. Ghun Yung Bok

Moderator of the Korean Church in Japan

Excerpts from visitors concerning the Assembly:

In the last 4 years there have been 2 Vatican Councils dealing mainly with the Ecumenical Movement. The Ecumenical Movement is a happy and glorious fact. However we must realize that it will take time. Our cultures, our theologies are different but even though because of these things the Ecumenical Movement may be difficult, it is needed and we must work for it.

Bishop Yoshigoro Taguchi

The Koreans and the Japanese should work together and we want you to be concerned for us. It may not be possible for you to stretch your arms to encircle Korea but you can be concerned for and have fellowship with the Koreans in Japan.

Rev. Ghun Yung Bok

As we greet the Kyodan on this, its 25th Anniversary is it not time that we of the United Church of Christ in Okinawa and the United Church of Christ in Japan become one? Uniting our churches, our forces, and our peoples in an effort to build the Kingdom in this chain of Islands.

Rev. Morihito Higa

It is an honor for me to bring greetings from the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. It is the intent and purpose of our church to, in every way possible, make available to the Kyodan our resources as we endeavor together to proclaim God's Word. We especially applaud the Kyodan emphasis "That, we, as a part of the body of Christ firmly believing in the sovereignty of Jesus Christ in history will be of service to this world and that we shall be able to carry forth an active and positive evangelistic proclamation of the gospel".

Dr. Ganse Little

